



BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON

ANNUAL REPORT

**On the Health
of the District
for the year
1969**

Presented by

The Medical Officer of Health

and

**The Public Health Inspector and
Surveyor**

HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

Chairman:

COUNCILLOR A. J. CROCKER

Vice-Chairman:

COUNCILLOR E. H. RAE

(Deceased December 1969)

Members:

ALDERMEN: F. A. PARTRIDGE (Deceased November 1969), C. E. W.
WHITE

COUNCILLORS: M. J. CUNLIFFE, M. G. R. DANIEL, R. L. C.
ELLIOTT, C. G. JONES, W. T. LETCHFORD, MRS. M. A. NASH,
R. R. TAYLOR, P. D. WOODGATE

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health:

MARY E. BUDDING, M.B., B.Ch., B.Sc., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor:

T. F. BENNETT, M.A.P.H.I., A.I.P.H.E.

Assistants to Public Health Inspector and Surveyor:

E. J. N. FURSE (Retired December, 1969)


N. F. WESTON

Clerk to the Medical Officer of Health:

MISS E. M. HAMBLBY, S.R.N. (Part-time)

Devon County Council Clinic, 70 Plymouth Road, Tavistock

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BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON

Annual Report on the Health of the Area during 1969

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I beg to present herewith the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough during 1969, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health and Social Security Circular 1/70 dated January 1970. Included in the Report is the Report of your Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

The estimated population, mid-year, showed a decrease of 40 compared with 1968. The Standardised Birth Rate of 14.4 per 1,000 population is a little higher than 1968 (14.1) but lower than the National Rate of 16.3 (16.9 in 1968). The Standardised Death Rate of 15.2 per 1,000 population is higher than the 1968 Rate (11.9) and the National Rate of 11.9.

It was encouraging after making further representations earlier in the year, to receive Ministry approval for construction of a modern Sewage Disposal Works.

It is regretted that the official policy of contracting the Mass Miniature Radiography Service resulted in its withdrawal at the end of September. However, it is hoped that strong representations will result in its resumption next year.

Tenby House is proving a great asset to the Borough for the use of the kitchen for the Meals-on-Wheels Service, and as a Day and Luncheon Club, organised by the W.R.V.S.

A desperately urgent need now for your Borough is the provision of bungalows for the elderly, preferably with a Warden.

The general health of the population remains good and no epidemics occurred during the year.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

Your obedient servant,

MARY E. BUDDING,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION 'A'

GENERAL STATISTICS

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| Area (statute acres) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 786 |
| Population—1951 census | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,899 |
| Population—1961 census | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,864 |
| Estimated home population—mid-1969 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,790 |
| Number of inhabited dwellings | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,436 |
| Rateable Value | ... | ... | ... | ... | £131,110 |
| Product of the Penny Rate | ... | ... | ... | ... | £493 |
| Loan debt | ... | ... | ... | ... | £438,144 |

VITAL STATISTICS

| Live Births | | | | | Male | Female | Total |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------------------|-------|
| Legitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 27 | 18 | 45 |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | | | | 48 |
| Deaths | | | | | 38 | 42 | 80 |
| | | | | | | England and Wales | |
| Live Births | | | | | | | |
| Number | ... | ... | ... | ... | 48 | | |
| Crude rate per 1,000 population | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12.7 | 16.3 | |
| Standardised Birth Rate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14.4 | | |
| Illegitimate Live Births | | | | | | | |
| (per cent of total births) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6% | | |
| Still Births | | | | | | | |
| Number | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 | | |
| Rate per 1,000 total live/stillbirths | ... | ... | ... | ... | 40 | 13 | |
| Total Live and Stillbirths | | | | | 50 | | |
| Infant Deaths | | | | | | | |
| (deaths under 1 year) | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil | | |
| Infant Mortality Rates (deaths under 1 year of age) | | | | | | | |
| Infant deaths per 1,000 total live births | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | 18 | |
| Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | 17 | |
| Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | 25 | |
| Neo-Natal Mortality Rates | | | | | | | |
| (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births) | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | 12 | |
| Early Neo-Natal Mortality Rate | | | | | | | |
| (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births) | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | 10 | |
| Perinatal Mortality Rate | | | | | | | |
| (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and stillbirths) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 40 | 23 | |
| Maternal Mortality | | | | | | | |
| (including abortion) | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil | | |
| Number of deaths | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil | | |
| Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | | |
| Deaths | | | | | | | |
| Number of Deaths | ... | ... | ... | ... | 80 | | |
| Crude death rate per 1,000 population | ... | ... | ... | ... | 21.1 | 11.9 | |
| Standardised death rate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 15.2 | | |

| Population | | | | | Mid-Year | Birth | Death |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|-------|-------|
| Year | | | | | Population | Rate | Rate |
| 1965 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,840 | 14.3 | 21.4 |
| 1966 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,810 | 15.7 | 19.2 |
| 1967 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,810 | 12.6 | 16.8 |
| 1968 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,830 | 12.5 | 18.5 |
| 1969 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,790 | 12.7 | 21.1 |

The Chief causes of death were as follows:

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Malignant Neoplasms | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Endocrine diseases | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Nervous System diseases | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Heart diseases | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 28 |
| Cerebro-vascular diseases | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Other diseases—circulatory system | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Influenza | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Pneumonia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Bronchitis and emphysema | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Other respiratory diseases | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Peptic Ulcer | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Internal obstruction and hernia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Nephritis and nephrosis | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Disease of musculo-skeletal system | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Suicide and self inflicted injuries | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| TOTAL (all causes) | | | | | | | 80 |

Age at Death Table

| | | | | | | | Male | Female |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
| Under 4 weeks | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 4 weeks and under 1 year | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 1—4 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 15—24 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 25—34 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 5—14 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 35—44 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 45—54 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 | 1 |
| 55—64 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 | 7 |
| 65—74 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 | 5 |
| 75 and over | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 | 29 |
| | | | | | | | 38 | 42 |

SECTION 'B'

1. Hospitals

There are two hospitals in the town. The Memorial Hospital (including maternity beds) and the Castle Hospital (for chronic sick and Geriatric cases). Both of these serve the town and also the large rural area outside the town.

2. County Council Services

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council provides the following services (based largely on the Okehampton Health Centre (Okehampton 2231) in the grounds of the Memorial Hospital, also providing accommodation for the General Practitioners in the town;

Domiciliary Midwifery, Home Nursing, Health Visitors, supervisory care of expectant and nursing mothers and children under 5, School Medical Service, Home Help Services, Chiropody, Occupation Therapy, Speech Therapy, Dental Service for children up to school-leaving age, expectant and nursing mothers, Cervical Cytology and Family Planning Clinics (the latter started in 1969), Mental Health Service. Vaccination and Immunisation procedures. The Orthopaedic Clinic is held each Monday on the premises.

The Ambulance Service is run under delegated powers by the St. John Ambulance Brigade, providing a 24-hour cover for the whole district.

3. W.R.V.S.

Meals-on-Wheels and Tenby House

Mrs. Campbell, the organiser, reports that, during 1969, 2,220 meals were prepared and delivered in the Borough, and in addition, 1,544 were prepared and consumed at the Luncheon Club, Tenby House.

Also, in Tenby House kitchen they prepared meals which were delivered to Folly Gate (from March) 308, and Hatherleigh (from October 31st) 140. This made a total of 4,212 meals!

Tenby House is a great asset to the Borough; there are 114 members of the Luncheon Club (including 14 Rural District members) and 45 use this service regularly, and the meals and companionship are warmly appreciated. The Day Club use is increasing, particularly on Luncheon Club days.

4. War Memorial Hospital Maternity Unit

During the year a total of 100 babies were born in the hospital:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Okehampton Borough | ... | ... | ... | ... | 24 |
| Okehampton Rural District | ... | ... | ... | ... | 53 |
| Other districts | ... | ... | ... | ... | 23 |
| | | | | | <hr/> 100 <hr/> |

Fifty per cent of the total births which occurred in the Okehampton Borough took place in the hospital.

5. Laboratory Services

Bacteriological examinations of specimens and of samples of milk, water, ice cream, etc. are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and any chemical analyses by the Public Analyst at Exeter.

6. Mass Radiography Unit

The Unit visited every other week during the year until September 26th, 1969, by which time, regrettably, too few had attended, in the view of the Regional Board, to make the service worth continuing.

| | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|------------------------------------|
| Total number X-Rayed | 118 | 91 | 209 (including 77 G.P. referrals). |
| Abnormalities | | | |
| Healed Pulmonary Tuberculosis | — | 3 | 3 |
| Bronchial Carcinoma | 1 | — | 1 |
| Acquired Cardiac Lesion | — | 1 | 1 |
| Bacterial and Virus Infections | | | |
| of the Lungs | 1 | — | 1 |
| Chronic Bronchitis | 2 | — | 2 |
| Dorsal Scoliosis | — | 1 | 1 |

SECTION 'C'

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply Sources

Mr. E. A. Robb, the Chief Engineer of the North Devon Water Board, has kindly supplied the following information of his Board's progress during the year:

"The supply to the Borough is obtained from intakes on the Black-a-Ven and Red-a-Ven Rivers with treatment, filtration and sterilization of the raw water at Brackentor Works which maintains a satisfactory supply to the whole of the Borough.

New mains have been laid to supply housing developments where required.

Chemical and bacteriological samples have been taken throughout the period and were satisfactory at all times. The quantity and quality of the supply were maintained to a high standard at all times. Hosepipe restrictions were **NOT** applied within the Borough".

Rainfall Figures

Rainfall figures for the past five years as follows:—

| | 1969 | 1968 | 1967 | 1966 | 1965 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Cranmere | | | 98.88 | 92.75 | 97.95 |
| Newbridge | | | 83.57 | 68.30 | 75.60 |
| Filter Station | | 52.24 | 64.52 | 61.43 | 59.02 |
| Pleasure Gardens ... | 47.46 | 50.15 | 61.29 | 60.17 | 62.03 |
| Dry Days (no rain) ... | 129 | 159 | 139 | 130 | 147 |

The driest months were September and October and the wettest January and November and the heaviest rainfalls were November 6th 1.54" and 1.56" on November 14th.

Sewerage

As a result of continued pressure on the Ministry outline approval has been received during the year for the scheme to provide modern sewage disposal works for the Borough and the Council's Consulting Engineers are now proceeding with the detailed scheme.

It is hoped that construction on the new works will commence during 1970/71. The works will incorporate the Pasveer Ditch method of disposal.

Public Conveniences

Two main toilet blocks are available to the public, one near the main car park and one near the post office.

Every effort is made to maintain these in a clean and hygienic condition. Damage to toilet facilities during the year has not been a major problem although minor damage is caused periodically.

Rodent Control

Treatment of the sewer systems have again been carried out by the Council's staff in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. In this way effective control of rat infestation in the sewers is ensured and very little infestation has in fact been found during the year.

Four complaints have been received and dealt with.

Refuse Collection and Disposal

The domestic refuse collection arrangements in the Borough continue to operate satisfactorily providing for one collection per week from all domestic premises.

All refuse continues to be burnt at the disposal tip as has been the case since the national outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease and the tip is bulldozed regularly to cover the burnt refuse and to maintain as tidy a surface as possible.

The available space at the tip is decreasing rapidly and efforts have been made during the year to seek alternative tipping facilities.

Frequent inspections continue to be made and very few problems from either rat or fly infestation have been encountered during the year, however periodic test treatments are carried out as a precautionary measure

Inspection of the District and Public Health Services

The number of complaints regarding public health matters received, recorded and dealt with during the year was six.

The following table sets out the inspections carried out during the year.

| | Number of Inspections | Number of Informal Notices Served | Number of Informal Notices Complied With |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| Housing | 75 | 3 | 3 |
| Drainage | 47 | 2 | 2 |
| Food Premises | 35 | 2 | 2 |
| Public Conveniences | 36 | — | — |
| Sewerage | 70 | — | — |
| Water Supply | 2 | — | — |
| Rivers | 10 | — | — |
| Refuse Disposal | 63 | — | — |
| Rodent Control | 16 | 1 | 1 |
| Moveable Dwellings | 5 | — | — |
| Schools | — | — | — |
| Infectious Diseases | — | — | — |
| Petroleum Acts | 18 | — | — |
| Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act | 50 | 4 | 3 |
| Factories | 23 | — | — |
| Miscellaneous | 145 | — | — |
| TOTAL ... | 615 | 12 | 11 |

Factories Act, 1961

Details of inspections carried out in accordance with the Factories Act, 1961 are set out in the tables which follow.

1. Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health. (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

| Premises | Number on Register | Number of | | Occupiers Prosecuted |
|---|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Inspections | Written Notices | |
| (i) Factories in which 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities. | 3 | 1 | — | — |
| (ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. | 40 | 15 | 2 | — |
| (iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-workers' premises). | 9 | 1 | — | — |
| TOTAL | 52 | 17 | 2 | — |

2. Cases in which Defects were found:

| Particulars | Number of cases in which defects were found | | | | Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted |
|--|---|----------|----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| | Found | Remedied | Referred to H.M. Inspector | by H.M. Inspector | |
| Want of cleanliness | — | — | — | — | — |
| Overcrowding | — | — | — | — | — |
| Unreasonable temperature | — | — | — | — | — |
| Inadequate ventilation | — | — | — | — | — |
| Ineffective drainage of floors | — | — | — | — | — |
| Sanitary conveniences : | | | | | |
| (a) Insufficient | 1 | 1 | — | — | — |
| (b) Unsuitable or defective | 2 | 2 | — | — | — |
| (c) Not separate for the sexes | — | — | — | — | — |
| Other offences (not including Outwork) | — | — | — | — | — |
| TOTAL | 3 | 3 | — | — | — |

SECTION 'D'

HOUSING

Town and Country Planning and Building Regulations

Applications for permission to develop under the Town and Country Planning Acts, Advertisement Regulations, Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act and the Building Regulations have been received over the past twelve months as follows:—

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| Alterations and Conversions | ... | ... | ... | 30 |
| Advertisement Signs | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Public Works | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| New Dwellings | ... | ... | ... | 15 |
| Garages | ... | ... | ... | 13 |
| Caravan Sites | ... | ... | ... | 1 (renewal) |
| Industrial and Shop Premises | ... | ... | ... | 7 |

Of the above 11 applications have been refused.

Private Enterprise

Seven new houses were erected by private enterprise during the year.

Improvement Grants

Six applications for Standard Improvement Grants under the provisions of the House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959 as amended by the Housing Acts 1961 and 1964 and Housing Act 1969 were received and approved. Three have been completed during the year.

Council Housing

New Houses

The end of the year has seen the completion of the 75 dwellings and 50 garages at the Moyses Meadow Estate. High Street and all the dwellings are occupied. The scheme is now in the defect maintenance period.

Old Peoples Accommodation

During the year the Council have been actively seeking a suitable site for old peoples accommodation and it is hoped that a flat site near the centre of the town will be able to be acquired for this purpose.

Maintenance and Repairs

Normal maintenance and repairs have been carried out during the year and the majority, except electrical repairs, have been carried out by the Council's maintenance staff.

Repairs are carried out as speedily as possible and during the year 413 reports were received and/or dealt with.

SECTION 'E'

INSPECTION and SUPERVISION of FOOD

The number of food premises falling within the provision of the Food Hygiene Regulations are as follows:—

Food Premises

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Grocers | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| Greengrocers | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Confectioners | ... | .. | ... | ... | 4 |
| Bread and Cakes | | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Meat Shops | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| Fish Shops | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Milk Shops | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Dairies | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Hotels and Bars | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Cafes | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |

Ice Cream and Preserved Foods

The number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 is as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ice Cream | ... | ... | ... | ... | 26 |
| Preparation or manufacture of sausage or potted or pressed, pickled or preserved food intended for sale | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |

Unsound Food

Twenty-six certificates for unsound food were issued during the year and 1,141 lbs. of miscellaneous food stuff condemned.

Slaughterhouse

There are now no slaughterhouses being used in the Borough.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1958

Applications were received for licences or renewal of licences to slaughter, and in all 3 cases were granted.

Poultry Packing Premises

There are two premises within the Borough where poultry is slaughtered and processed and the through put of these premises during the year was 6,250.

per week

SECTION 'F'

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND
OTHER DISEASES

Tuberculosis

No new cases were notified, but two old cases transferred to other areas.

The Register now stands as follows:—

| Pulmonary Tuberculosis | | Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis | |
|------------------------|--------|----------------------------|--------|
| Male | Female | Male | Female |
| 7 | 3 | Nil | Nil |

Infectious Diseases Notified by Medical Practitioners:

Measles—Sixteen cases were notified by Medical Practitioners:

| | | | | | | | Male | Female |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
| Under 1 year | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 1— | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 1 |
| 2— | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 2 |
| 3— | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 2 |
| 4— | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 6 |
| 5—9 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 10—14 | | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 15—24 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 25 and over | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| Age unknown | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | — |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | 5 | 11 |

Salmonellosis

Salmonella dublin infection occurred in a calf. The owners were advised on the hygienic precautions to be taken and there was no further animal or human case.

Food Poisoning

It was reported, informally, by a Medical Practitioner living outside the area that several patients of his had suffered from acute Gastro-Intestinal symptoms after eating at an establishment adjacent to your area. On investigation, the Cook and household lived in the Borough, and samples taken from them all proved to be negative.

